

Old Town Yuma Historic Architectural Resource Survey

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Yuma established a Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) in 2020, with responsibility for the preservation of historic buildings, structures, sites, and districts within the City of Yuma. The HPC is supported by a seven-person volunteer board, which identifies its purpose to foster civic and community pride, create and preserve landmarks in the community. The active and engaged HPC Board has created opportunities for social gatherings, community outreach and educational events to celebrate the heritage resources of the city. The hallmark event of the HPC are historic tours sharing the history of landmarks in the community, culminating in community celebrations including food and live music.

In 2022, the Yuma HPC became a Certified Local Government (CLG). The Old Town Yuma Historic Windshield Survey is the first project of the Yuma HPC in their capacity as a CLG. The project will create the foundation of the Yuma survey program. The planning process for creation of this project began almost immediately after receipt of CLG status. The HPC began discussions with History Colorado survey and CLG specialists regarding interest in conducting survey work and began discussions with historic preservation consultants to discuss vision for the project. Cornerstone Cultural Consulting, LLC. was selected to complete the project.

Modern research staples including google earth, historic aerials and topographic maps dating to the late 19th or early 20th centuries, are limited in availability and quality. Sanborn maps provide insight into the community from 1893 – 1928; topographic maps and aerial images are available from the 1970s. Research for this project emphasized historic publications available through the Denver Public Library Western History Collection and Library of Congress, historic newspaper articles, government publications including Census supplements, and historic trade journals. The capture of local knowledge through historic studies and community events is of critical importance; this project consulted previous publications of local history and conducted community outreach to collect community knowledge.

The appreciation of history and community connection is evident in the care of buildings, attendance and participation in community engagement events. This project includes prioritization of surveyed properties for advancement in historic preservation activities. Properties with deep history and family or community connections may be indicated as low priority for further historic preservation survey if the building envelope contains a prevalence of replacement materials and/or demonstrates significant additions that obscure the historic form of the building. Historic preservation considers both the historic significance and historic integrity of properties. Significance refers to the role a property played in history; integrity is assessed relative to the physical attributes of the property and its ability to convey the period in history where it derives significance. Where integrity has been compromised, the property may not advance to historic designation, however its significance and historic connections remain and may be honored, enjoyed, and celebrated by its owners and the wider community.

The project was paid for in part by a History Colorado State Historical Fund (SHF) grant (Grant #23-M2-006). Matching funds were provided by the Colorado Housing and Finance Authority (CHFA).

The survey and maps are available for viewing at Yuma Public Library.